

# **Smokey Drive Elementary News**

**August 21, 2020 Update**

**Principal: C. Thompson  
Vice Principal: K. Longard  
School Counsellor: S. Tillett  
Email: [sdes@hrce.ca](mailto:sdes@hrce.ca)  
Website: [sde.hrce.ca](http://sde.hrce.ca)  
Twitter: [@SmokeyDrive](https://twitter.com/SmokeyDrive)**

# Welcome to all from Mrs. Longard and Ms. Thompson

We hope that you are enjoying the glorious weather we've been having this summer. We are so excited to be welcoming our new families to the community and welcoming everyone else back. It's been a unique few months and we are looking forward to having our students back in our school. We can't wait share stories with them again and build relationships to continue our journey of learning.



# Back to School Plan

As Mr. Leroux outlined in his message to HRCE families last week, we are working on a plan for our school based on “Nova Scotia’s BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN” published recently by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. If you have not yet seen the plan, you can access it here: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/backtoschool>. We know that you are eager to know what the changes and safety protocols are going to look like at Smokey Drive and we are working diligently on these. We will be sending you the details about our school specific plan within the next two weeks. Our plan will be “flexible and fluid” as we may need to make changes to best support our school community as they arise. The well-being of our school community continues to be our top priority and we will have processes in place to support the learning and well-being of all our students upon their return.

# Communication and Getting Ready for School

Some changes outlined in the Back to School Plan include the wearing of masks for students in grades 4 and 5 and keeping students' contacts at school limited to their class. These Public Health protocols will be enforced to keep students and staff as safe as possible. Over the next couple of weeks, watch for more email communications from the school.

We will be sending our opening plan as well as a detailed description of the first day of school as soon as they are ready.

Families and school need to work together to explain the changes to our students and help them understand how following our new procedures will help them and the people around them. Some things you can do now to help your child get ready for school:

\*When you're out in public, point out the social distancing markers and direction arrows on floors and practice following them. You can talk about why they are important to keep each other safe.

\*Practice wearing a mask--especially the students in grades 4 & 5.

\*Practice taking turns and social distancing while playing on playgrounds.

# Counselling Connection

Hi Smokey Drive families, my name is Sara Tillett and I will be your new counsellor this coming year.

This year brings changes, some we expected and many we did not foresee. It is normal to feel some level of stress when trying to reduce your child's worries and anxieties when encouraging a positive back-to-school transition. As we prepare to return to school, there are a few things you can do. The first is to have an honest, factual and open conversation about COVID-19 and what that means for returning to school. For younger children, you can talk about how educators and older students may be wearing masks in classrooms. You can explain to your child that they will be wearing a mask in the hall and that they will have to practice social distancing. For older children (in Grade 4 &5), you could ask if there are specific things they are worried or concerned about, and talk these through with them. They'll be wearing a mask all day which may be challenging without practice.

# Counselling Connection (Continued)

You can help your child identify their role in staying safe. This includes avoiding touching their face, washing their hands or using hand-sanitizer and keeping their distance from others. Focus on what we *can* to make sure things go well (following instructions, engaging in good hygiene), rather than focusing on things that are out of their control (like if a student gets COVID-19).

Kids feel better when they can name their worries. As the school counsellor, I am here to listen and support students to develop the lifelong skills they need for navigating challenges. We are in this together and I am one resource that can help support your child. I look forward to meeting you all and being part of the Smokey Drive family!

# School Supplies

The school will be supplying many of the classroom supplies for students, including scribblers, folders, glue, pencils, erasers, etc. at no cost to the students. Supply lists (one for grades Primary-2 and another for grades 3-5) are posted on our school website. Do not worry about getting a 2<sup>nd</sup> pair of indoor shoes at this time; students will not be leaving a pair of shoes at school. Many of you will already have the items we are asking you to provide from previous school years, such as pencil cases, scissors, rulers, crayons etc. If you are unable to send any supplies in with your child, let us know and we will make sure they have everything they need.

P-2 List: [https://sde.hrce.ca/sites/default/files/websites/sde.hrce.ca/our-school-file/2020/06/supplies\\_list\\_for\\_families\\_p-2.pdf](https://sde.hrce.ca/sites/default/files/websites/sde.hrce.ca/our-school-file/2020/06/supplies_list_for_families_p-2.pdf)

3-5 List: [https://sde.hrce.ca/sites/default/files/websites/sde.hrce.ca/our-school-file/2020/06/\\_supply\\_list\\_for\\_families\\_3-5.pdf](https://sde.hrce.ca/sites/default/files/websites/sde.hrce.ca/our-school-file/2020/06/_supply_list_for_families_3-5.pdf)